

Distinguished members of the Health Appropriations Subcommittee:

We are Michael Rion and Nancy Rion testifying jointly. We live in West Hartford and are submitting testimony as concerned citizens.

We are testifying in support of the \$2.5 million included in the Governor's budget on Line T1449 for the Department of Public Health to fund gun violence intervention grants in FY2024, and the \$400,000 on Line 274 for operational expenses each year.

But given the magnitude of the crisis of gun violence, especially in Connecticut's urban centers, I believe the grant appropriation needs to be larger, at \$10 million in each year of the fiscal 2024-25 budget.,

Through conversations with Hartford residents near our congregation (Immanuel Congregational Church), we have learned how gun violence destroys lives and the vital social fabric of our community. There are proven interventions that will help, and we should do all we can to put these to work.

Thank you for your consideration,

Michael Rion

Nancy Rion

West Hartford CT